

ANDEAN COUNTERDRUG INITIATIVE BACKGROUND

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Andean Counterdrug Initiative

Countries:

- Colombia
- Peru
- Bolivia
- Ecuador
- Brazil
- Venezuela
- Panama

Key achievements from FY 2003-2004:

- Aerial eradication:
 - Reduced coca cultivation by 21% in Colombia – a decline of 33% over the past two years.
 - Reduced coca cultivation by 16% in Andean region.
 - Opium poppy cultivation in Colombia dropped 25%, the second straight year of decline.
- Alternative development programs
 - Since 2000 have supported more than 45,000 hectares of legal crops.
 - Resulted in the manual eradication of 22,000 hectares of illicit crops (coca and opium poppy).
- Security
 - Police presence extended to all 158 municipalities in Colombia that had no police before.
 - Colombia extradited 87 Colombian citizens to US over past year on narcotics-related charges.

Eradication in Colombia - Unprecedented commitment to aerial eradication.

- Coca: 127,000 hectares sprayed in 2003; over 58,000 hectares already in 2004.
 - Crop reduced to 113,850 hectares, from 169,000 hectares 2 years ago.
 - Reduced coca cultivation by 21 percent in 2003 and 15 percent in 2002.
 - Reduced potential production by over 20 percent for export quality cocaine.
 - Manually eradicated over 8,000 hectares in 2003.
- Opium poppy (source of heroin): almost 3,000 hectares sprayed in 2003; over 1,600 hectares this year.
 - Reduced cultivation by 10 percent in 2003 and 25 percent in 2002.
 - Reduced potential pure heroin production by 10 percent in 2003.
 - Manually eradicated almost 1,000 hectares in 2003.

Interdiction – Increased efforts by Colombia in 2003.

- Seized 70 metric tons of cocaine and contributed to almost twice that much being seized in the Transit Zone by the U.S.
- Instituted a wealth tax that generated over \$800 million for defense – boosted police and military spending from 3.5 percent of GDP to 5.8 percent in 2003.
- President Uribe has now established a permanent government presence in all of Colombia's 1,098 municipalities for the first time in the country's history.
 - Police units have returned to over 158 local communities.
 - Colombian National Police have organized and deployed 25 (of a projected 62) 150-man mobile squadrons, totaling 16,500 police to reinforce security in the rural conflict zones.
 - Late 2002, President Uribe reinstituted the 1993 conscription law that allows for the recruitment and training of community based "peasant" soldiers.

- Air Bridge Denial program
 - Was restarted in August 2003 – safely interdicted more aircraft and seized more cocaine in 2003 than in any previous year before ABD was halted in 2001.
 - Has forced down and/or destroyed over 28 suspected narcotics trafficking aircraft.
 - Has seized 7.9 metric tons of illicit drugs.
 - Resulted in changed narcotics trafficking patterns.

Organizational Attack on Narcoterrorists

- Streamlined extradition procedures resulting in 68 extraditions in 2003 (25 extraditions in 2004; 115 extraditions since Uribe's inauguration on Aug 7, 2002).
 - Sent first ever FARC member to the U.S. and several ex-Cali Cartel leaders.
- Passed a new law on asset forfeiture – reduced the processing time for assets seized from known narcoterrorists.
- Increased the repatriation of child soldiers and the number of defections from FARC ranks.
 - 2,538 total voluntary repatriations in 2003 (438 minor; 1,367 FARC).
 - 699 repatriations in 2004 through April (124 minors; 328 FARC).
- Upon the cessation of the demilitarized zone in February 2002, the Colombian military has reoccupied the main urban areas in the former zone.
- Increased military pressure resulted in the December 2002 unilateral ceasefire declaration by the United Self Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), the largest of the paramilitary groups.
- Overall desertions amongst terrorist groups are up 80%.

Counterterrorism

- Security
 - Terrorism cases were down 48 percent in 2003.
 - Established a network of over one million informants to prevent terrorist attacks.
 - Successful preparation of 99 pilots and 154 mechanics and crew chiefs since 1999 to support 33 UH-1N helicopters.
 - Almost 8 in 10 Colombians (78 %) support peace talks between the Government of Colombia and the paramilitary forces. In a July 2003 poll 65% of Colombian citizens said they felt more secure than they did in July 2002, one month before Uribe took office. Real spending on defense has increased every year under Uribe. According to the most recent Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Finance figures, Colombian spending on defense has grown over 30% since 2001.
- Infrastructure Security/Pipeline Security
 - \$100 million for US forces-led training and equipping re: Cano Limon pipeline.
 - Pipeline provides major revenue for Colombia.
 - Sharp decline of attacks on pipeline, from 177 in 2000 to 32 in 2003 and five to date in 2004.
- Narcoterrorism
 - In 2003, nearly 7,000 narcoterrorists were captured.
 - More than 3600 terrorists have deserted their organizations since President Uribe took office.

- More than 14 FARC commanders have been killed or captured since October. Two who were key players in drug trafficking, hostage-taking and other criminal acts against the United States.
- Hostages – Progress in 2003
 - Colombia's murder rate dropped 20%.
 - Terrorist incidents dropped 49%.
 - Number of internally displaced people dropped 50%.
- Extending Rule of Law
 - Training of Colombian police units in neglected municipalities.
 - Colombian police units in all 1,098 municipalities for the first time ever.

Colombia "Byrd Caps"

- Current law set by P.L. 107-115 and renewed each year:
 - 400 military personnel.
 - 400 civilian contractor personnel.
- Administration's request to increase this year:
 - To a total of 800 military personnel.
 - To a total of 600 civilian contractor personnel.
- Why Caps need to be increased:
 - Until recently we were able to work comfortably within the ceilings. The increased pace of implementation for programs we support being undertaken by the Uribe Administration offers an opportunity for real progress towards our goals.
 - Current cap levels hurt management efficiency and prevent full implementation of programs.
 - Average number of US military and US citizen civilian contractors are growing as programs are expanded, implemented, and re-started (Air Bridge Denial) or new programs (Anti-Kidnapping Initiative) are begun.
 - During 2003, the number of US military varied from 128 to 396; that of US citizen civilian contractors from 246 to 400.
 - Legislated requirements, including human rights vetting and the prohibition on combat will be maintained.
 - Draft legislation to raise the military cap to 800 and the civilian cap to 600 was included in the FY 05 DOD Authorization Bill after extensive consultation with Congressional staff.
 - Continuing Department of State programs executed by civilian contractors as part of the plan to succeed in Colombia include: the Airbridge Denial Program, Justice Training, Maintenance and Repair, and USAID.

The Colombian Armed Forces vs. Paramilitary units.

- Arrests, combat operations, and intelligence activities by the Colombian Armed Forces against paramilitaries increased in 2003.
- Colombia's police and military captured 3,166 paramilitaries in 2003, an increase of 135% over the 1,356 paramilitaries captured in 2002.
- They killed in combat 346 paramilitaries in 2003, an increase of 85% over the 187 killed in 2002.

Human Rights

- Kidnappings were down 26% in 2003.
- Homicides were down 20% in 2003 – lowest rate since 1987.
- Colombia's illegally armed groups committed 73 massacres in 2003, compared to 115 in 2002. The number of victims affected by those massacres dropped 38% from 680 in 2002 to 418 in 2003.
- 60 labor leaders were assassinated in 2003, compared to 184 in 2002.
- There were 156,188 newly displaced persons in 2003, a drop of 50% compared to the 310,000 persons displaced in 2002.
- Commission of Jurists reported that of 2,500 human rights allegations in Colombia over the past year, less than 2 percent were against the Colombian military. This compares to between 40 and 50 percent of the allegations just six or seven years ago.
- There have been no allegations of human rights abuses filed against U.S. trained units.
- The Colombian military is establishing a judge-advocate general corps, as the U.S. military has.